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**AN ACCOUNT**  
**OF THE**  
*(Mass.)*  
**BOSTON FEMALE ASYLUM.**

**WITH THE**  
**ACT OF INCORPORATION,**  
**BY-LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS.**



**Boston :**  
**J. E. HINCKLEY & CO., 14 WATER STREET.**  
**1833.**

**9 April, 1892.**

**The Gift of  
JOHN H. MORISON, D.D.**

AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
BOSTON FEMALE ASYLUM.

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IN the beginning of the year 1800, Mrs. HANNAH STILLMAN, in connexion with several ladies of Boston, formed the design of establishing an Asylum for Female Orphan Children. After some difficulty and delay, one hundred subscribers were obtained, who became members of the Society.—The yearly assessment was fixed at Three Dollars.

The first general meeting was held on the 26th of September ; a plan for organizing the Society adopted ; and a Board, consisting of a First and Second Directress, a Treasurer, Secretary, and twelve Managers, chosen. Several claimants for the promised charity had been offered, and it was determined to commence, with the small means already obtained, upon a plan of the strictest economy. At the next meeting, in October, a Governess was selected, who was to hire a house suitable for the purpose, and take charge of the children,



giving them board and instruction, upon the payment of \$1 50 per week for each,—the whole establishment being under the superintendence of the Managers.

It was determined that as many children should be received as could be supported by the yearly subscriptions; but that all donations should be so invested as to form a permanent fund, the interest only of which should be used for the current expenses.

A public Anniversary meeting was held in September 1801, a sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. STILLMAN, and a contribution of five hundred dollars collected. Twelve children, supported by the infant Institution, were present. During this year the number of subscribers increased to three hundred, and considerable donations were received.

In 1802, through the unremitting exertions of Mr. SAMUEL SMITH, the sum of nine thousand dollars was subscribed by the gentlemen of Boston for the purpose of building or purchasing a house for the Institution. The interest of this sum was appropriated toward paying the rent of the Asylum from 1808, till the purchase of the present establishment in 1811.

In 1803, an Act of Incorporation was granted by the Legislature of the State, and Bye-laws established by the Board.

In 1808, the Managers were enabled, by the state of their funds, to make an entire change in their system, and the increased number of children made it in every respect desirable. Instead of boarding the children, they hired and furnished a house, appointed a Governess and Assistant, and provided supplies for the family through the Monthly Committees. The change was found very advantageous, and the prosperity of the Institution has continued to advance. These notices of its origin and early state are preserved as an answer to the frequent enquiries of those, who, in other places, are projecting similar charities, and for the satisfaction and encouragement of those who are still laboring in its cause.

The "Boston Female Asylum" has now been established thirty-three years. In that time 328 children have been admitted; 252 placed at service, or otherwise removed; 11 have died, and 65 remain in the Asylum. The greatest care is always taken in selecting places for those who are to be bound out, and the demand for them is much greater than the supply. Two are always selected to serve their apprenticeship in the Asylum; the older of the children also take their turns to share in the household labour, which is thus accomplished by hiring one female domestic.

The children have their regular school hours,

and are well instructed in those useful branches suitable to their age and station. The school is thoroughly examined every week by a Committee of the Managers, who endeavour to obtain knowledge of the dispositions and moral habits of each child. They are also employed in plain sewing and knitting, and the amount received for their work, for several years past, will average about one hundred dollars a year.

The Institution has now been in operation long enough for enquiries to be made respecting its permanent effects on those who have been supported and taught under its care. It is unquestionable that much wretchedness has been relieved, and much suffering and exposure to vice prevented. More than this was hoped for, and it is believed that more than this has been effected, in the influences produced on the character and situation of those early subjects of this charity, who are now engaged in the active scenes of life. Many have been presented at the Board on the expiration of their apprenticeship with highly satisfactory evidences of their good conduct, and capability of supporting themselves in a respectable manner: Some are known to have been married and comfortably provided for; and others are sometimes met with in various situations, who are ready gratefully to acknowledge their obligations to the Institution.

If it be objected that some have proved unworthy, it may be asked what human means have ever produced all the good results which the sanguine have anticipated ; and if, with all that has been attempted for such, they have not done well, what might they not have been without this care and instruction ? It may also be said, that the proportion of unfavorable cases appears larger from the fact that such are most known. One who goes out of the way is a subject of observation, while the many who tread the quiet path of humble duty are unnoticed. It is earnestly wished by the Managers, that those who take children from the Asylum should, on the expiration of their apprenticeship, present them at the Board, or otherwise make report of their character and prospects.

At the close of each year, a letter is sent to every person holding an indenture, of which the term has expired within that time, asking the desired information. Still it is found very difficult to obtain returns on which an accurate report can be founded. But it is hoped the importance of furnishing such, may in future be more considered, and that those who take these children will remember that the interest of the Managers for them does not cease with their removal from the Asylum.

In September, 1825, the following note was sent, enclosing the sum specified.

" To the Trustees of the Female Asylum.

" LADIES :—I have to request of you to appropriate the enclosed sum of fifty dollars to the following purpose, viz. It shall be invested in such a manner, that the income arising from it may be awarded (at their Anniversary) to the most deserving girl, as the donor wishes it to be considered as a stimulus for promoting their advancement in knowledge and virtue.

" I am, Ladies, respectfully yours,

" UNKNOWN."

This benefactor has remained "*unknown*." The following method of carrying the kind intention into effect was adopted. The "most deserving" of the elder class of girls being yearly selected by the Governess, Teacher, and Managers, receives a certificate that in consequence of her good conduct, she is entitled to call on the Treasurer at the Board, when she shall be eighteen years old, for the sum of three dollars. It was thought that the possession of the certificate would be both a reward and an incitement to "persevere in well doing;" and that the knowledge that her presenting herself at the Board to claim the premium would be expected, might serve as a further motive to maintain and complete her good character. The sum of three dollars was assumed, because, though the funds do not yield six per cent. per annum, the time of the deposit's remaining unclaimed would balance the deficiency.

Should this notice meet the eye of the benevolent donor, it is hoped that the manner of appropriating the gift will not be disapproved.

The funds of this Institution were all, in 1825, invested in the "Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company:" and the interest, together with the now very small amount received from the yearly subscription, has since defrayed the annual expense of the establishment, except in one instance, when it became necessary to draw from the principal. Its numbers, however, and its consequent expenses, are yearly increasing; and its funds would be inadequate to meet any great additional demand, either permanent or contingent. It is hoped, therefore, that its friends will not grow lukewarm, or become few, from the belief that enough has already been done.

This Institution has been highly favored by the community; it is believed to have returned good for the good it has received; and to the benevolence and intelligence of the same community it may confidently be entrusted.

The whole number of subscribers to the Institution since its foundation, is more than one thousand,—of these six had been subjects of the charity. The present number of annual subscribers is 101.

A life subscription is fifty dollars, and the number of ladies who have become life subscribers is 32.

**OFFICERS AND MANAGERS**

**FOR THE THIRTY-THIRD YEAR.**

**Mrs. SARAH PARKMAN, *First Directress.***

**Mrs. WM. PRESCOTT, *Second Directress.***

**Miss MARY OTIS, *Treasurer.***

**Mrs. THOMAS B. WALES, *Secretary.***

**Miss P. L. FROTHINGHAM, *Collecting Secretary.***

***MANAGERS.***

<b>Mrs. WM. SMITH,</b>	<b>Mrs. CHARLES BARNARD,</b>
<b>Mrs. SUSAN JACKSON,</b>	<b>Mrs. ISAAC MANSFIELD,</b>
<b>Mrs. SOPHIA D. TRACY,</b>	<b>Mrs. AMOS LAWRENCE,</b>
<b>Miss HANNAH GREENE,</b>	<b>Mrs. A. H. EVERETT,</b>
<b>Miss MARGARET F. LAMB,</b>	<b>Mrs. HENRY HALL,</b>
<b>Mrs. WILLARD BADGER,</b>	<b>Mrs. WM. REYNOLDS.</b>

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts.**

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*In the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and three.*

**AN ACT to Incorporate HANNAH STILLMAN and  
others into a Society, by the name of  
THE BOSTON FEMALE ASYLUM.**


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WHEREAS HANNAH STILLMAN and a number of other Ladies of the town of Boston have associated for the charitable purpose of relieving, instructing, employing, and assisting FEMALE ORPHAN CHILDREN; and to carry their Association into effect, have petitioned to be incorporated :—

SECTION 1. *BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same,* That the said HANNAH STILLMAN, and her associates, together with such others, as may become subscribers to the same Institution, in the manner hereinafter provided, be, and they hereby are, incorporated into a Society, by the name of the

**BOSTON FEMALE ASYLUM;**

and by that name shall be a Corporation forever; with power to have a Common Seal; to make Contracts, relative to the objects of their Institution; to sue and be sued; to establish Bye-Laws and Orders for the regulation of the said Society, and the preservation and application of the funds





thereof:—*Provided* the same be not repugnant to the constitution or laws of this Commonwealth; to take, hold, and possess, any estate, real or personal, by subscription, gift, grant, purchase, devise, or otherwise, free from taxes, and the same to improve, lease, exchange, or sell, and convey, for the sole benefit of said Institution: *Provided*, That the value of the real estate of said Society, shall never exceed *Fifty Thousand Dollars*; and the annual income of the whole estate of said Society shall not exceed *Twenty Thousand Dollars*.

SECTION II. *And be it further enacted*, That every married woman, belonging to said Society, who shall, with consent of her husband, receive any of the money, or other property of said Society, shall thereby render her said husband accountable therefor to said Society; and every woman, whether sole or married, who shall subscribe and pay to the funds of said Society, the sum of *three dollars*, annually, shall, by such subscription and payment, become a member of said Society; liable, however, to be removed, whenever she shall refuse, or neglect to pay her said annual subscription.

SECTION III. *And be it further enacted*, That the said Society shall meet in *Boston*, on the last Tuesday of *September*, annually, for the purpose of electing, by ballot, from their members, a First and Second Directress, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and a Board of not less than six, nor more than twelve Managers; all which Officers shall hold their said offices for one year, and until others shall be elected to succeed them. And the Managers, for the time being, shall publish a notification of the time and place of each annual meeting, in two of the newspapers printed in *Boston*, at least seven days before the time of holding the same. Upon any urgent occasion, the First or Second Directress, or, in their absence, the Secretary; or, whenever requested, in writing, by fifty members of said Society, any five of the Managers, may ap-

point a Special Meeting of said Society ; to be notified in the same manner as annual meetings. And at any regular meeting, the Society may remove any Manager from office ; and, by ballot, fill any vacancy in the Board of Managers, or any other corporate office ;—*Provided*, That, in case of removal, two-thirds of the members present, being a majority of the whole Corporation, shall concur.

SECTION IV. *And be it further enacted*, That the Treasurer of said Society shall always be a single woman, of the age of twenty-one years, or upwards, and shall give bond with sufficient surety or sureties, to account annually, or oftener, if required by said Society, or the Board of Managers, for all money and other property of said Society coming to her hands ; and, in general, to discharge the duties of her said office with fidelity.

SECTION V. *And be it further enacted*, That the Board of Managers, for the time being, shall have the management and application of the subscriptions, funds, and estate of the Society, solely for the purpose of this Institution ; and no sale or transfer of any real or personal estate of said Society shall be valid, unless approved by them ; and no money shall be paid out of the Treasury of said Society, except by their order. They shall likewise have authority, at their discretion, to take into their Asylum such Female Orphan Children, as they may judge suitable objects of charity, to enjoy the benefits of the Institution ; and also, to accept a surrender, in writing, by the father, or, where there is no father, by the mother, of any female child or children, to the care and direction of said Society ; and to bind out, in virtuous families, until the age of eighteen years, or marriage within that age, any such orphans, or children thus surrendered, or any female child, or children, who, being destitute of parents within this commonwealth, shall have been relieved and supported by said Society ; *Provided*, That any parent, whose child or

children, during the absence of their said parent out of this Commonwealth, shall have received relief and support, or been bound out as aforesaid, shall have liberty, on his or her return, to receive such child or children, upon paying to the Treasurer of said Society the expense incurred in her, or their relief and support, as aforesaid. And the Managers shall have authority to establish any Rules and Bye-Laws for the regulation of the proceedings of said Board, and the concerns of said Society, not repugnant to the Laws of the Commonwealth, or the Bye-Laws and Orders of said Society. Not less than three Managers shall constitute a quorum for transacting business; and all questions shall be decided by the votes of a majority of the Managers present.

SECTION VI. *And be it further enacted*, That any writ or process against said Corporation may be served by the Officer's leaving an attested copy thereof with the Treasurer of said Society, or at her usual place of residence, thirty days before the return-day thereof; and the said Treasurer, or any agent appointed for that purpose by the Society, or by the Managers, may appear, by attorney, and defend or prosecute any suit in behalf of said Society.

SECTION VII. *And be it further enacted*, That all Instruments of Conveyance or Contract, which may lawfully be made by said Society, if approved by the Board of Managers, shall be signed by the First or Second Directress, and countersigned by the Secretary, and, if necessary, sealed with the common Seal of said Society; and, when so executed, shall bind the said Society, and be valid in Law.

SECTION VIII. *And be it further enacted*, That *Hannah Stillman*, shall continue First Directress; *Sarah Bowdoin*, Second Directress; *Elizabeth Perkins*, Treasurer; *Elizabeth Thurston*, Secretary; *Mary Hubbard*, *Sarah Parkman*, *Hannah Smith*, *Mary Gray*, *Abigail May*, *Margaret Whitwell*, *Elizabeth Dorr*, *Mary Grew*, *Ann Green*, *Margaret Cooper*,

and *Elizabeth Goodwin*, Managers ; until the last Tuesday of September next, and until a new election shall be made as aforesaid ; and shall be, and they hereby are, invested, during said time, with all the powers which are herein given to the Managers to be annually elected by the Society.

*In the House of Representatives, Feb. 25, 1803.*

This Bill having had three several readings, passed to be enacted.

JOHN C. JONES, *Speaker.*

*In Senate, Feb. 26, 1803.*

This Bill having had two several readings, passed to be enacted.

DAVID COBB, *President.*

*Feb. 26, 1803.*

By the Governor approved,

CALEB STRONG.

*A true Copy---Attest,*

JOHN AVERY, *Secretary.*



## **By-Laws and Regulations**

ESTABLISHED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGERS.

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### **I.**

A MEETING of the Board of Managers shall be held on the last Tuesday in every month, at the Asylum House, for the purpose of attending to the concerns of the Society. The time of meeting shall be at 10 o'clock, A. M.

### **II.**

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify and attend all meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Managers; keep a fair and correct record of their proceedings, and do all necessary writing, relative to the business of the Corporation. In case of the sickness or absence of the Secretary, or vacancy of the office, the First Directress,—in her absence, sickness or vacancy of the office, the second Directress,—and in the absence or sickness of the second Directress, or vacancy of both offices, the eldest Manager, shall notify meetings of the Society, or Board, when a Secretary pro tem. shall be chosen; and four days notice shall be given of

any meeting of the Society, or Board, except on some extraordinary occasion.

### III.

The first Directress shall preside at the meetings of the Board of Managers, preserve order, and in equal divisions have the casting vote; in her absence, the second Directress shall preside at the meetings of the Board; and if both be absent, the Managers shall choose a member to preside for that meeting.

### IV.

The Treasurer shall attend the meetings of the Board of Managers; render every three months an account of moneys received, paid out, and remaining in her hands; and shall at the end of every six months settle her account with a committee to be appointed for that purpose by the Board; and not any moneys, or other property, belonging to the Society, shall be paid or delivered to the Treasurer, until bonds, in the penal sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars, with sureties sufficient in the opinion of the Board, shall be duly executed, conditioned for the faithful performance of the duties of her office.

### V.

After the annual election of a Board of Managers, they shall choose from their number a Collecting Secretary, whose duty it shall be to receive pay-

ment of subscriptions, give receipts, and account with the Treasurer for the same. . . . And all transactions, relative to the money concerns of the Society, shall be conducted solely by the Treasurer and Collecting Secretary.

#### VI.

All accounts against the Society shall be laid before the Board of Managers for examination, and, if allowed, an Order shall be drawn by the Secretary on the Treasurer for payment of the same; and no moneys shall be paid without such order drawn in pursuance of a vote of the Board or Society.

#### VII.

A list of children, proposed by subscribers for admission into the Asylum, if approved by the Board, shall be kept by the Secretary; and priority of application shall give right to admission, unless, in the opinion of a majority of Managers, at a regular meeting, the circumstances of any child shall require immediate relief.

#### VIII.

Twenty subscribers in any town adjacent to Boston shall be entitled to place a child in the Asylum, for so long a time as they pay their annual subscriptions.

#### IX.

No child shall be received into, or dismissed from the Asylum, or placed in any family, without



a vote of the Board, at a regular meeting, duly notified.

X.

No child under three, or more than ten years of age, shall be received into the Asylum ; and, at a suitable age, the children shall be placed in virtuous families, " until the age of eighteen years, or marriage within that age," except such as may from infirmity be taught some other business.

XI.

In case of sickness, the children shall be committed to the care of those gentlemen of the Faculty, who will attend them gratis ; and recommended for medicine to the charity of the Boston Dispensary.

XII.

A Committee of two ladies shall be chosen every month, to examine the children of the Asylum respecting their proficiency in learning, enquire into their treatment, and report at every meeting of the Board.

XIII.

No relative or friend shall interfere in the management of the children of the Asylum, nor visit them but in presence of the Governess, nor at any time that such visits are disapproved by the Board.

XIV.

A sample of the bread, meat, and other provi-

sions, used in the Asylum, shall be produced, whenever required, to the Board, or Monthly Committee.

#### XV.

The Governess shall not be absent, or sleep out of the Asylum without permission from one of the Board, unless upon some urgent occasion. She shall visit the children's rooms every night before going to bed.

#### XVI.


In putting out the children of the Asylum, subscribers shall always have the preference.

#### XVII.

No child shall be placed out of the Asylum until she has reached the age of eleven years.

Form of Obligation to be signed by a parent or guardian on surrendering a child or ward to the protection of the Boston Female Asylum.

"I, the subscriber, solicitous that my child shall receive the benefits and advantages of the Boston Female Asylum, and the Board of Managers being willing to receive and provide for, and also to place her out in a virtuous family until the age of eighteen years, agreeably to the rules and regulations of the Society, provided I do relinquish my child to them ;—I do hereby promise not to interfere in the management of her in any respect



whatever, *or visit* her without their consent. And in consideration of their benevolence in thus receiving and providing for her, I do relinquish all right and claim to her and her services, until she shall arrive to eighteen years of age. And I do engage, that I will not ask, or receive, any compensation for the same, nor take her from, or induce her to leave the family, where she may be placed by the Board of Managers of the Asylum."

SIGNED.

WITNESS.

## **Rules and Regulations**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHILDREN IN THE  
ASYLUM.**

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### **I.**

**ALL** the children (if the weather permit) shall regularly attend public worship with their Governess, every Sunday, at such place as the Board shall direct ; and in the intervals of worship, they shall read in the Bible and other religious books.

### **II.**

The Governess, to whose care the tuition and management of the children is more immediately confided, shall attend them at their meals, see that proper decorum be observed, that grace is said before and after. She shall also read a chapter in the Bible, and pray with them every morning ; and endeavor, by precept and example, to instil into their young and tender minds the principles of religion.

### **III.**

The children shall be taught to pay a sacred regard to truth, and to the performance of every moral duty.

### **IV.**

The Governess shall teach them to spell, read,

and to work in plain sewing, knitting, and marking ; and those who are old enough, shall mend their own clothes, and assist, by weekly rotation, in the domestic business of the family. She shall instruct and bring them up in habits of neatness and industry, and inculcate the importance of an habitual course of improvement, industry and virtue.

V.

The Governess shall not suffer any of the children to be absent from the Asylum, without special permission, in writing, from one of the Managers.

THE END.





~~JUN 1 1973~~

JUN 13 1973

JUL 30 1973

*[Handwritten signature]*



